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Imagery analysis report

Libyan Military Activity In Chad

[Redacted Box] (S)

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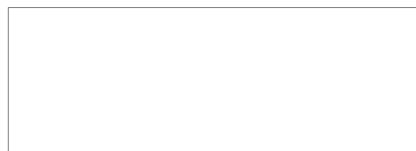
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Z-20203/80
IAR-0357/80
24 DECEMBER 1980
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LIBYAN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN CHAD, [REDACTED] (S)

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1. (S/D) Libyan air and ground forces elements are playing a decisive role during the current phase of Chad's chronic 15-year old civil war. This imagery-derived report summarizes recent [REDACTED] Libyan military activity supporting President Goukouni's efforts to defeat rival forces of former Defense Minister Habre. The report also summarizes military activity observed in other west and central African states resulting from this expanded Libyan military presence in Chad.

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25X1**OVERVIEW**

2. (S/D) Since early November, Libyan ground forces combat and support units—assisted by tactical, transport, and support aircraft and helicopters—have been observed moving steadily southward through Chad with the following apparent objectives: to reinforce Libyan and government contingents in the capital city of Ndjamen and to seize Abeche, a Habre stronghold near the Sudanese border (Figure 1). Imagery of Ndjamen [REDACTED] provided evidence of fighting for control of the city between Habre's forces and those of the government, who were being backed by Libyan armor. On subsequent coverage of the Ndjamen area [REDACTED] there were no indications of continued fighting. A Libyan military presence at key installations supports open-press reports that the government had consolidated its control over the capital and that Habre's forces had withdrawn. In eastern Chad, the Libyans also appeared to have achieved their prime objective of reaching Abeche. Two CH-47 (Chinook) helicopters, probably part of an advanced Libyan contingent, were seen at Abeche Airfield [REDACTED]. Libyan units were occupying the airfield and were establishing a perimeter defense. [REDACTED] a Libyan military presence was also seen at Ati and Biltine, two towns in eastern Chad where Libyan activity had not previously been seen.

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3. (S/D) Because of the growing negative reaction to Libyan involvement in Chad by several states in west and central Africa, imagery of selected airfields and ground forces installations was analyzed for signs of military reaction by such countries as the Sudan, the Central African Republic, Niger, or Nigeria (Figure 2). Furthermore, imagery of those facilities in Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Gabon, and the Central African Republic [REDACTED]

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DISCUSSION

4. (S/D) For at least the past six weeks, Libyan combat forces including mechanized infantry, artillery, armor, and related support units have been observed at Ounianga Kebir, Faya-Largeau, Fada, Oum Chalouba, and Koro Toro (Figure 1) as the forces advanced toward their ultimate objectives of Ndjamen and Abeche. Logistical and close-air support for these units has been furnished by aircraft and helicopters of the Libyan air force. A detailed description and analysis of preparations by Libya for operations in Chad and an advance into southern and eastern Chad is provided in a recent report.¹

Ndjamen

5. (S/D) Photographic coverage of the most recent factional fighting in Ndjamen was acquired on [REDACTED] Figure 3 shows damaged and smoking buildings in the traditional residential quarters near Ndjamen Airfield [REDACTED] on the western edge of the city. Libyan armor units apparently assisted government forces against Habre during this phase of fighting. Medium tanks were observed moving toward the center of the city (Figure 4), and extensive tracks indicated that tanks had participated in fighting around the airfield and nearby housing areas.

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6. (S/D) Imagery of the Ndjamen area [REDACTED] just after Habre's evacuation of the city, showed a large concentration of Libyan ground units east of Ndjamen Airfield Northwest [REDACTED]. Identifiable units included elements of a tank company, a BM-21-equipped multiple-rocket launcher battery, one 122mm D-30 howitzer battery, and one heavy-lift battalion. Helicopters seen along the runway included five HIND and one CH-47 (Chinook) helicopter. This airfield, which is 3 nautical miles (nm) northwest of Ndjamen, has a graded earth runway that was first identified under construction [REDACTED]. In addition to the concentration of Libyan ground units present, extensive stockpiles of supplies were in revetted areas along the runway, indicating that this airfield probably serves a key logistical support role for Libyan forces in the Ndjamen area.

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7. (S/D) At Dougia Airfield [REDACTED] 35 nm northwest of Ndjamen (Figure 1), nine Libyan SF-260 ground attack/trainers, one CH-47 (Chinook), and one Twin Otter were observed [REDACTED]

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8. (S/D) Control of these two airstrips enabled the Libyans to use aircraft and helicopters in operations to secure Ndjamen. Control of Ndjamen Airfield, a joint civilian and military facility on the western outskirts of Ndjamen, was under contention and, therefore, this airfield could not be used for operations.

9. (S/D) The intermittent periods of fighting in Ndjamen since the spring of 1980 have resulted in increasing numbers of civilian refugees crossing the Chari River and settling in a large refugee camp on the southern edge of Kousseri in Cameroon. According to an article in a September issue of the French journal, *Le Monde*,² there were approximately 30,000 people in the camp which was established after March 1980 (Figures 6 and 7). As imagery of December shows, the size of the camp has dramatically increased during the most recent rounds of fighting in Ndjamen. Civilians can be seen crossing into Cameroon on both small craft and a ferry which crosses the Chari River between Ndjamen and Kousseri (Figure 8). A further result of the recent fighting in Ndjamen has been the extensive damage to the residential, business, and government quarters in the city (Figure 9).

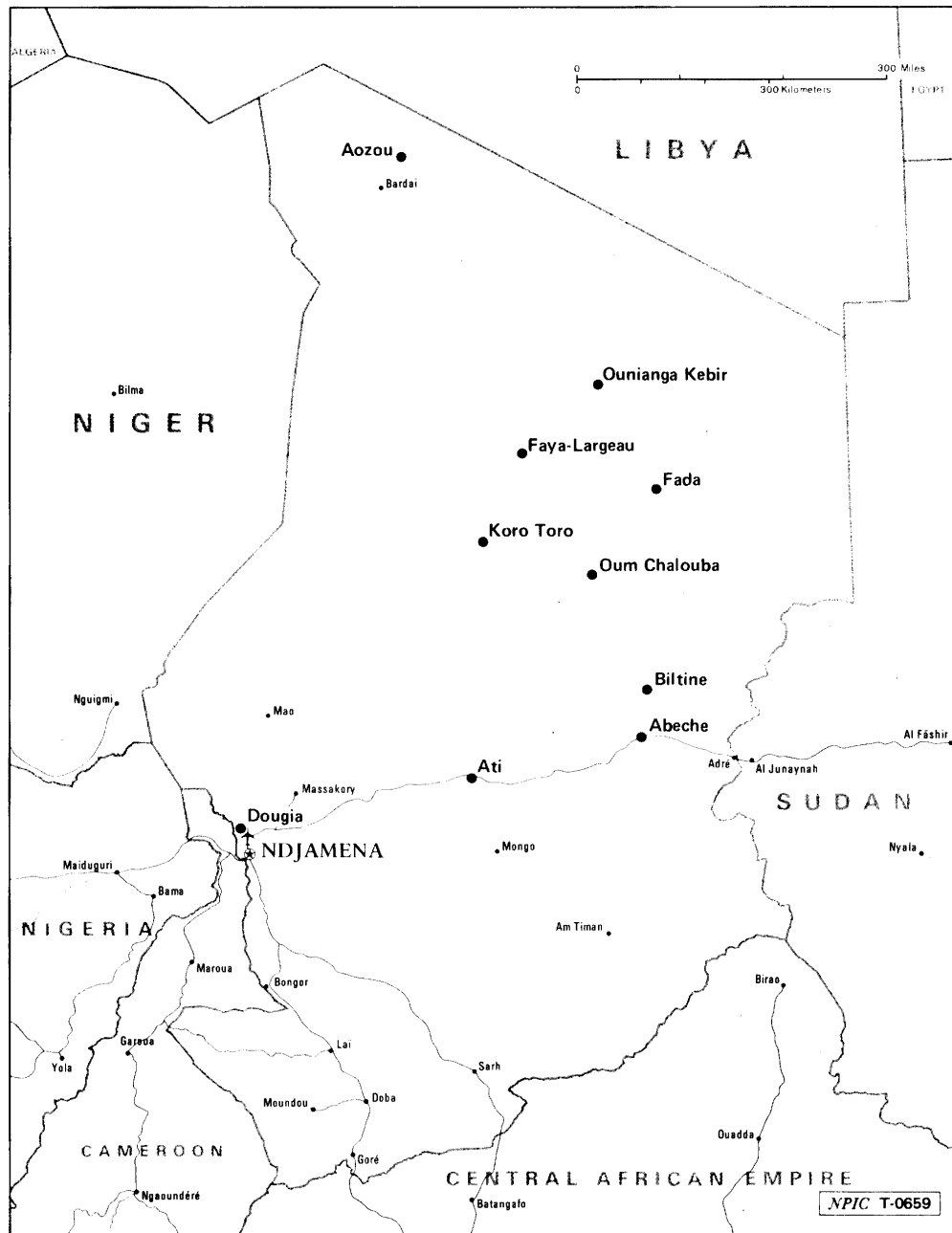


FIGURE 1. LOCATIONS OF LIBYAN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN CHAD

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— Railroad
— Road
✈ Airport

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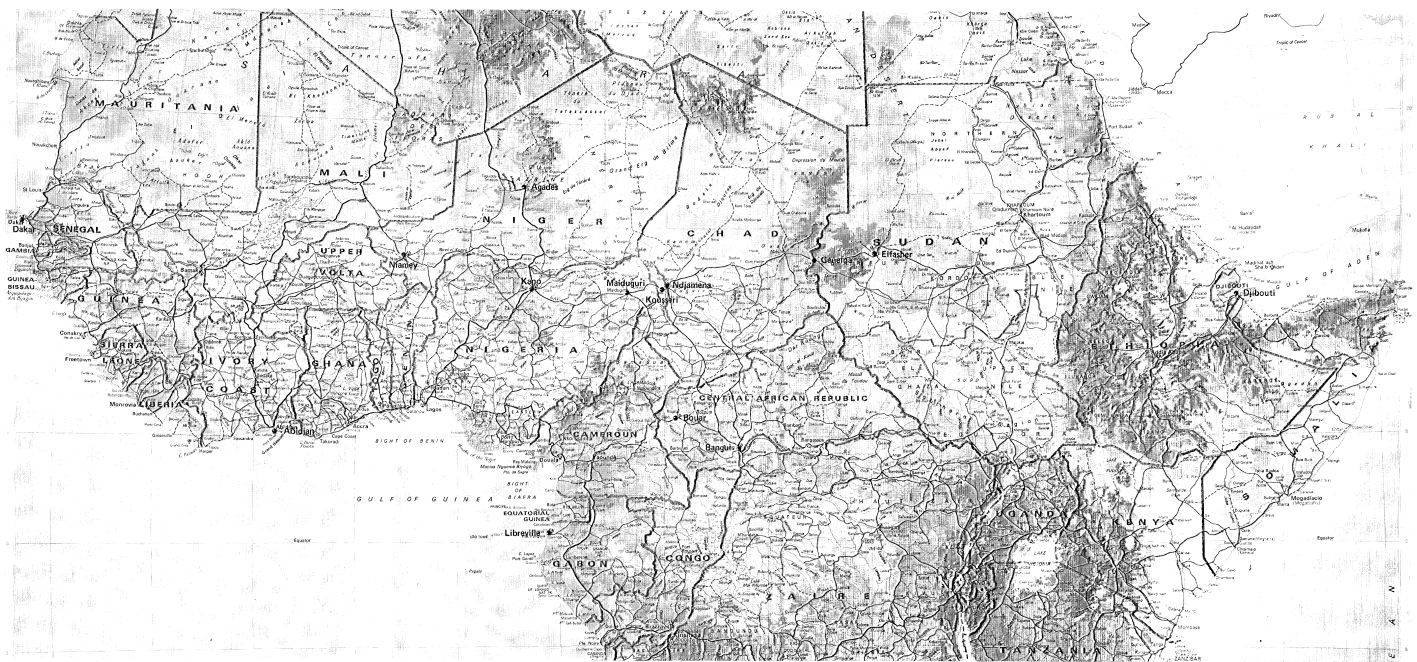


FIGURE 2. LOCATIONS OF SELECTED AIRFIELDS AND INSTALLATIONS IN EAST/WEST AFRICA

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Eastern Chad

10. (S/D) The first indication that the Libyans had reached Abeche was the observation of two CH-47 (Chinook) on the parking apron at the airfield on the outskirts of town [REDACTED]. Three trucks and numerous personnel were observed nearby in the support area of the airfield. However, there were no Libyan ground units or indications of perimeter security measures that have been seen at other airstrips under Libyan control during this campaign in Chad. [REDACTED] a Libyan combat force including mechanized infantry and artillery units was seen for the first time at the airfield (Figure 10).

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11. (S/D) The drive towards Abeche apparently included Libyan forces converging from both west and north. [REDACTED] Ati, approximately 100 nm west of Abeche, showed elements of a tank company, a multiple-rocket launcher (MRL) battery, a BTR-60 PB-equipped mechanized infantry company, and a heavy-lift battalion. An F-27, a transport aircraft that is probably serving a general resupply and medical-evacuation role for the Libyans in Chad, was also present at Ati. None of this activity was seen on previous coverage [REDACTED] At Oum Chalouba, a large concentration of Libyan forces was seen [REDACTED] the bulk of two infantry battalions (each having a mechanized infantry company), elements of an MRL battalion, and two artillery batteries had either departed or were forming into convoys, probably for moving towards Abeche.

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12. (S/D) A Libyan military force was also seen for the first time at Biltine Airfield [REDACTED] approximately 42 nm north of Abeche. [REDACTED] The mechanized infantry, artillery, MRL, and support units seen at Biltine were probably part of the contingents that had departed from Oum Chalouba [REDACTED]

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Regional Reaction

13. (S/D) Mid-December coverage of Sudan, Niger, and Nigeria revealed no conclusive evidence of any military reaction in these countries to events in Chad. Each has taken strong diplomatic stands against Libyan involvement, and Sudan has reportedly³ deployed some of its military forces along the common border with Chad. In addition, Sudan and Egypt were reportedly⁴ resupplying Habre's forces through Geneina and El Fasher near Sudan's western border with Chad. Early December coverage of selected airfields and ground forces installations (Figure 2)—Niamey Airfield [REDACTED] in Niger; Maiduguri Airfield [REDACTED] and Kano Airfield [REDACTED] in northern Nigeria; El Fasher Airfield [REDACTED] El Fasher Military Area West [REDACTED] El Fasher Vehicle Storage Depot [REDACTED] and Geneina Airfield [REDACTED] in western Sudan—revealed no evidence of troop movements or increased logistical activity. No unusual deployment of fighter or support aircraft was observed. In addition, there were no indications on imagery [REDACTED] that Geneina and El Fasher Airfields were being used to furnish military assistance to Habre's forces across the border at Abeche [REDACTED] however, a camouflage-painted C-130 and a Fokker F-27 aircraft were observed at El Fasher Airfield. Both Egypt and Sudan carry these planes in their inventories.

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MAPS OR CHARTS

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